The Woman In the Alcove

Author of "The Millionsire Baby," "The filligree Ball," "The House In the Mist," "The Amethyat Box," Etc.

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"for very warny this time. It was not an agreeable venture. It was like descending buto a well, with possible death at the bottom. I could see nothing and presently could hear nothing but the almost imperceptible sliding of my own fingers down the curve of the wall, which was all I had to guide me. Had he stopped toldway and would my first intimation of his presence be the touch of cold ster - the flinging around me of two not secons arms? I had met with no break in the smooth surface of the wall, so could not have reached the second story. When 1 should get there the question would be whether to leave the staircase and seek him in the mases of its great rooms or to keep on down to the parior floor and so to the street, whither he was possibly bound. I own that I was almost tempted to turn on my light one with it, but I rememus of little use I should be to you lying in this well of a stateway with a builet in me, and so I managed to compose myself and go on as I had begun. Next Instant my fingers slipped round the edge of an opening, and I knew that the moment of decision had come. Realizing that no one can move so softly that he will not give away his presence in some way, I paused for the sound which I knew must come, and when a click rose from the depths of the ball before me I plunged into that hall and thus into the house

"Hers it was not so dark, yet I could make out none of the objects I now and then ran against. I passed a mirror (I hardly know how I knew it to be such and in that mirror I seemed to see the ghost of a ghost fill by and vanish. It was too much. I muttered a suppress, ooth and plunged forward, when I struck against a closing. door. It flew open again, and I rushed in, furning on my light in my extreme desperation, when, instead of hearing the sharp report of a pistol, as I expected, I saw a second door full to before me, this time with a sound like the snap of a spring lock. Finding that this was so, and that all advance was barred that way. I wheeled hurriedly back toward the door by which I had entered the place, to find that that had fallen to simultaneously with the other, a single spring acting for both. I was trapped-a prisoner in the strangest sort of passageway or closet, and as a speedy look about presently assured me, a prisoner with very little hope of immediate escape, for the doors were not only immovable, without even locks to pick or panels to break in, but the place was bare of windows, ami the only communication which it could be said to have with the utside world at all was a shaft rising from the ceiling almost to the top of the house. Whether this served as a ventilator, or a means of lighting up the hole when both doors were shut, It was much too innecessible to offer any apparent way of escape.

"Never was a man more thoroughly boxed in. As I realized how little chance there was of any outside interference, how my captor, even if he was seen leaving the house by the officer on duly, would be taken for myself and so allowed to escape, I own that I feit my position a hopeless one. But anger is a powerful stimulant, and I was mortally angry, not only with-Bears, but with myself. So when I was done swearing I took another look around, and, unding that there was no getting through the walls, turned my attention wholly to the shaft, which would certainly lead me out of the place if I could only find means to

"And how do you think I managed to do this at last? A look at my bedraggled, line covered clothes may give you some idea. I cut a passage for myself up those perpendicular closet However, I am here now, sir,

walls as the boy did up the face of and in very much the same condition the majoral bridge in Virginia. De la which I left that house. I thought you remember that old story in the my first duty was to tell you that I had reader? It came to me like an in seen Hiram Sears in that house last appretion as I stood looking up from night and put you on his track." below, and, though I knew that I I drew a long breath-I think the inshould have to work most of the way spector did. I had been almost rigid In perfect darkness, I decided that a from excitement, and I don't believe man's life was worth some risk and he was quite free from it either. But that I had rather fall and break my his voice was calmer than I expected neck while doing something than to when he finally said: spend hours in maddening inactivity. only to face death at last from slow night's work." Then the inspector put

to him some questions, which seemed "I had a knife, an exceedingly good to fix the fact that Sears had left the knife, in my pocket, and for the first house before Swestwater did, after few sleps I should have the light of my which he bade him soul certain men to electric totab. The difficulty—that is, bim and then go and ux bimself up. the first difficulty-was to reach the shaft from the floor where I stood. had almost forgotten myself. There was but one article of furniture to the room, and that was something between a table and a deet. No chairs, and the deak was not high enough to enable me to reach the mouth of the shaft. If I could turn it on end, there might be some hope. But this did not look for the However, I threw off not allede, any more than I did to real make to they rem evilated when was my cont and went at the thin, with a what had just passed. Nevertheless vengeance, and, whether I was given su | we understood each other. perhuman power or whether the clumes. thing was not as heavy as it looked, I the conversation where we had lett it. did finally succeed in turning it on its end close under the opening from which read to you." he went on; "will you the shaft rule. The next thing was to listen to it now?" get on its top. That seemed about us "Gindly," said I, "It is Wellgood's, impossible as climbing the bare wall I believe."
Itself, but presently I bethought me He did not answer save by a curious of the drawers, and though they were locked, I did succeed by the aid of my ling the paper again from his desk, keys to get enough of them open to went on realing: mpke for myself a very good pair of

**************** "If could now see our way to the by a man who knew him well, and if month of the shaft, but eiter that! we could fit the description of the one Taking out my knife. I felt the caucil to that of the other, we should have it It was a good one. So was the tolar | easy. But the few persons who have but was it good enough to work heles seen Wellgood differ greatly in their in plaster? It depended somewhat remembrance of his features and even upon the planter. Had the masons in of his coloring. It is astonishing how finishing that shart any thought of superficielly most people see a man the poor wrotch who ous day would even when they are thrown into dally have to pit his life against the hard contact with him. Mr. Jones says the ness of the final covering? My first man's eyes are gray, his hair a wig dig at it would tell. I own I trem- and dark, his nose pudgy, and his face bled violently at the vespect of what without much expression; his landsean to me and lady, that his eyes are blue, his helt, that first test would wondered if the passing watch I whether wig or not, a dusty auturn, feit starting at every pure was the restand and his look quick and piercing a

sult of the effort I had been engaged in look which given's made her afraid. or just plain fear. "Inspector, I do not intend to have agree, or rather, all agree, that he you live with me through the five more were no board. Sears did, but a beard tal hours which followed. I was on ean be easily taken off-and all of abled to pierce that phister with my them declare that they would know knife and even to penetrate doug him metantly if they saw him. And enough to afford a place for the tips of so the matter stands. Even you can my fingers and afterward for the point give me no definite description-one, I of my toes, digging, prying, aweating, mean, as satisfactory or unsatisfactory panting, listen a likel for a sudden as this of Sears. opening of the clars beneath, then for I shook my head. Like the others, some shout or wicked interference felt that I should know him if I saw from above as I worked my way up him, but I could go no further then inch by luch, foot by foot, to what that. There seemed to be so little that might not be safety after it was at was distinctive about the man.

tained. "Five hours six. Then I struck all this would serve to rouse my memsomething which proved to he a win- new, shrugged his shoulders and put dow and when I realized this and the best face he could on the matter. knew that with but one more court I "Well, well," said he, "we shall hay should breathe freely again, I core as to be patient. A day may make all near falling as I had at any time be the difference possible in our outlook. fore I began this terrible climb.

"Happily, I had some premonition of igen" my dunger and threw myself into a po. He seemed to realize he had said a sillon which held me till the dizzy min-) ute passed. Then I went calmly on with my work, and in another half hour had reached the wiedow, which, fortunately for me, not only opened inward, but was off the fatch. It was with a sense of inexpressible relief that I clambered through this window and for a helef moment breathed in the pungent oder of cedur. But it could have been only for a moment. It was 3 o'clock in the afternoon before I found myself again in the outer air.

"Strange that no one has testified to that handwriting." I remarked, He tooked at me in surprise. Effity persons have sent in samples of writing which they think like it," he observed; "often of persons who never heard of the Fairbrothers. We have been bothered greatly with the bust ness. You know little of the Ciflicalties the police labor under. "I know too much," I sighed,

"I worked my way up tuch by titch."

The only way I can account for the

lapse of time is that the strain to

which both body and nerve had been

subjected was too much for even my

hardy body and that I fell to the floor

of the codar closet and from a faint

went into a sleep that lasted until 2.

I can easily account for the last hour

because it took me that long to cut the

thick paueling from the door of the

"Pil remember this. It was a good

I believe he had forgotten me. I

CHAPTER XV.

OT until the inspector had given several orders was I again sum-

"The description I was just about to

"A man of fifty five looking the on-

of sixty. Medium belynt, tonignificant

moned into his presence. He

He smiled and patted me on the

remarked, looking very disappointed.

"The description is of Sears given me

His none she don't remember. Both

The inspector, hoping, perhaps, that

"Well, well," said he, "we shall have

If we can lay hands on either of these

good too much, for he bustantly

changed the subject by asking if I had

succeeded in getting a sample of Miss

Grey's writing. I was forced to say

no; that everything had been carefully

put away. But I do not know what

moment I nery come up-su it," I added.

Investigation

"I do not forget its importance in this

"Vory good. Those lines handed up

to Mrs. Fairbrother from the walk out-

side are the second most valuable ciew

I knew. It was the stiletto,

I did not ask him what the first was.

"Forget every other daty but that of your calling until you get some definite word from me. I shall not keep you in anapense one minute longer than is absolutely necessary." He had risen. I rose too. But I was

not satisfied. I could not leave the room with my ideas (I might say with my convictions) in such a turnoll.

"Inspector," said I, "you will think me very obstinate, but all you have told me about Sears, all I have heard about him, in fact"-this I emphasized -"does not convince me of the entire fally of my own suspicions. Indeed, I am afraid that, if anything, they are strengthened. This steward, who is a doubtful character, I acknowledge fully have had his reasons for wishing Mrs. Fairfrother's death, may even have had a hand in the matter, but what evidence have you to show that he, himself, entered the alcove, struck the blow or stole the diamond? I have listened eagerly for some such evidence, but I have fisiened in vain."

"I know," he murmured, ""I know But it will come, at least I think so." This should have reassured me, no doubt, and sent me away quiet and a deep conviction, possibly-kept me about 130, 900 individual cars. lingering before the impector and finally gave me the courage to say:

"I know I ought not to speak another word; that I am putting myself at a disadvantage in doing so, but I cannot help it, inspector. I cannot belp it when I see you laying such sixess upon the few indirect clews connecting the

suspicious Sears with this crime, and ignoring the direct clews we have against one whom we need not name." Had I gone too far? Had my presumption transgressed all bounds and would be show a very natural augus? No: he smiled instead, an enigmatical smile no doubt, which I found it diffi-

cult to understand, but yet a smile. "You mean," he suggested, "that Sears' possible connection with the crime cannot eliminate Mr. Grey's very positive one. Nor can the fact that Wellgood's hand came in contact with moned into his presence. He Mr. Grey's at or near the time of the similed as our eyes met, but did exchange of the false stoom will the the guilty nullber of this overtunes. The inspector's hand was on the door When I was again seared he took up knob, but he dropped it at this and,

surveying me very quietly, salid: "I thought that a few days spout at the bedside of Miss Grey in the society of so renowned and cultured a gentleman as her father would disabuse you of these demoging suspicions."
"I don't wonder that you thought so,"

I burst out. "You would think so all News. the more if you knew how kind he can ! be and what softenule he shows for



Lexob.

all about blm. But I cannot get over | C rated by William IV. the thets. They all point, it seems to O me, straight in one direction."

'AHT You heard what was said in C the room -1 saw it in your eye-how the rum who surprised the steward in his own room last might heard him 5 Union. talking of love and denth in connection with Mrs. Fairbrether. To kiss what 00000000000000000000000 I hate! It is almost as bud as to kill what I love'-he said something like

"Yes, I heard that. But did be mean that he had been her actual slayer? Could you convict him on those words:

"Well, we shall find out. Then, as to Wellgood's part in the little business, you choose to consider that the jook ice at the time the stone fell Mr. Grey's hand. What proof trave you that the substitution you believe In was not made by him? He could easily have done it while crossing the "GERMAN DAY" AT JAMESTOWN room to Mr. Grey's side."

"Inspector!" Then he ly, as the absurdity of the suggestion struck me with full force: "He do this! A wait- Day" at the Jamestown Exposition to er, or, as you think, Mr. Pairbrother's day was a pronounced secrest steward to be provided with so hard. Thousands of Germans from Vi. ginta steward, to be provided with so hardto-come by an article as this counterpart of a great sto, e? Isn't that al- was held under the auspices of the most as incredible a supposition as German-American Alliance. It was on any I have myself presumed to ad August 1, 1775, that the Germans of

credibilities, the greatest of which, to to British opression, and it was in commy mind, is the persistence with which memoration of this event that today's you, a kind hearted enough little woman, persevere in ascribing the deepest guilt to one you profess to admire and certainly would be glad to find in- Washington, Baltimore and Richmond, pocent of any complicity with a great

I felt that I must justify myself. Mr. Durand has had no such condderation shown him." said I.

"I know, my child, I know; but the the turn which things have taken withnet continuing to insirt upon involving Mr. Grey in your suspicions?"

A smile took off the edge of this rebake, yet I felt it keenly, and only the confidence I had in his fairness as a man and public official enabled me to

(To be Conneued.)

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> Those nummer suits you see now were made by O. L. Brooks, the leadng tallor.

> Going to paint. Ruin is over, Summer is here. The Lincoln paints stand the Vats. Arkansas Lomber

CAR OWNERS TO ORGANIZE

(By Associated Press.) .Cleveland O., Aug. 1 :- It is experted that as a result of a conference be gan in this city today there will be brought into existance an association of the individual car owners of the United States. The chief aims of the roposed organization are to place the adividual car on a basis with that of he railroad company car, and to have the per diem charge apply to the indiidual car when delayed. The promois of the organization expect that the association will embrace in its mem happy. But something-the tenacity of bership over 250 owners controlling

> An Economical Vacation Round-trip tickets at figures but lightly in excess of one way fares to unny resorts in Canada and New Eng and will be placed on sale on var-oos dates after June 1, 1207.

> Full particulars of dutes of sale lmits, stopovers and descriptive lit erature can be obtained by writing Geo W. Vacx. A. G. P. & T. A., Grand Trunk Railway System, 135 Adams

> When the Republican party runs out of proper prosidential timber i may think seriously of Cortelyou as a possible presidential nominee, but oot till then -Springfield, Mo. Repub-

> > "Regular as the Sun"

expression as old as the race. Ne oute the rising and setting of the sun is the most regular performance in the universe, unless it is the aution of the liver and between the performance with the magnificent new hour has 200 for Ring's New Life Pink quarantees penetral rooms and is bented at 11th

the campaign oney picking for the Democrate Haskell will scarcely

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THIS DATE IN HISTORY.

1291-Founding of the Swlas O Confederation.
O 1985 Marguis de Domonville O 10 rectored on his duties as Gover- C one to mor of Canada.

O dent of William and Mary Col-O lego, died. Born 1656. 1745 - James Blair, Best prest O

1748 Samuel Donk, the "Apon O O the of Learning and Religion to O O the west," born in Vicginia O O Died in Fennessee, Dec. 12, 1829. O 1770-Covernor Robert Dinwid O C die of Virginia died. Born about C

1798 Battle of the Nile. 1801-Jonathan Edwards, Jr., O elebrated theologian, died. Born O C May 26, 1745. C 1821-London Bridge inaugu C

1834 Slavery ceased through O O got the British possessions 1864 General Sherman began C 1876-Colorado admitted to the O

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300 pairs boys Knickerbocker knee pants at 25 per cent off, at the Annex.

(By Associated Proces) Norfolk, Va., Aug. 1:- "German Maryland, Pennsylvania and other states were present. The celebration Philadelphia lasted a manifesto in Possibly, but the affair is full of in which they advocated armed resistance exercises were held. The program in Hexamer, of Philadelphia, and music by the german singing societies of

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OHIO COUNTY HAS CENTENNIAL

(By Associated Press) Ravena. O., Aug. 1:- Portage cour vs contountal was observed today with an outdoor celebration at Brady Lake under the auspices of the Portin of blin, 30, the quickest and surest though the county was settled in 1750 City. the county was not organized until 1807. Previous to that the whole WANT.

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